Schemes for the welfare of scavengers, beggars and widows

2997. SHRI R.N. ARYA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about the number of scavengers, beggars and destitute widows;

(b) the schemes and programmes to help those wretched persons; and

(c) the details of assistance provided for their education and habitations by Government during the last one year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) As per the information available, the total number of scavengers and their dependents in the country is 6,53,583. The Central Government operates a National Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their dependents for training and rehabilitation of Scavengers with a view to engaging them in alternate and dignified occupations. The Central Government also operates the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship for the children of those engaged in unclean occupations. The object of this scheme is to provide financial assistance to enable the children of scavengers of dry latrines, tanners, flayers and sweepers, who have traditional link with scavenging, to pursue pre-matric education. The statement showing the central assistance released under the two schemes during 2000-01 is enclosed (*See* below).

The details regarding beggars and destitute widows in the country are not maintained by the Central Government. However, the Socio-Economic Programme of the Central Social Welfare Board endeavors to provide employment opportunities to destitute women, widows, deserted and the physically handicapped to supplement their meager family income. Also, under the Scheme of Condensed Course of Education for Women started by the Central Social Welfare Board in 1958 with the objective of providing basic education and skills to needy women and also to benefit widows, destituted deserted women and also those belonging to economically backward classes, grant is given to voluntary organizations for conducting courses of two-year duration for preparing candidates for primary, middle and matric level examinations and one-year duration for matric failed candidates. During 2000-2001, grants amounting to Rs. 247.47 lakh have been sanctioned for conducting 443 courses covering 11,225 women candidates. The Central Government has also taken initiatives to coordinate the efforts of various Ministries/Departments of the

Government of India and the State Governments of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal for rehabilitation of the marginalized women of Vrindavan.

Statement

Central Assistance released during 2000-01 under the National Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their dependents

(Rs. lakh)

S.No.	State	Central Assistance Released
1.	Assam	372.00
2.	Chhattisgarh	1500.00
3.	Jharkhand	1085.00
4.	Maharashtra	2135.00
5.	Uttaranchal	1000.00
	TOTAL:	6092.00

Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship for the children of those engaged in unclean occupations

(Rs. in lakh)

S.No	State	Central Assistance Released
1.	Andhra Pradesh	63.90
2.	Bihar	20.00
3.	Goa	0.34
4.	Gujarat	459.25
5.	Himachal Pradesh	22.05
6.	Karnataka	3.03
7.	Madhya Pradesh	153.45
8.	Maharashtra	160.96
9.	Rajasthan	107.51
10.	Tamil Nadu	170.25
11.	Triupra	2.45
	TOTAL:	1163.19